

March 10, 2022

Dear Representative Hampton, Senator Witkos, & all member of the Judiciary Committee -

I respectfully write to you to ask you to OPPOSE SB 16: An Act Addressing Gun Violence and Juvenile Crime.

I think we can all agree that parts of this bill are laudable. As a citizen of this state, I too want a reduction in crime and especially juvenile crime, as those juveniles are at risk of becoming adult criminals. I too want more police on the street and want programs to help curb "gun" violence, well, all violence really. We have a major problem with recidivism, and I too want that stopped. As a gun owner in this state however, I cannot abide by the Governor's caustic rhetoric on "too many damn guns". I was not at all shocked to hear that from him.

This bill seems to have little to do with finding solutions to our crime or violence problems, and more to do with attacking the rights of citizens. For example, it bans the purchase of firearms with "arm braces". Can anyone name a single shooting in our state, or possibly the whole country, that ever involved a gun with an arm brace? No? Then it's not a solution to stop gun violence. Or the new rules on so called "ghost guns". Even requiring people in possession of antique firearms to have them defaced with a state issued number. Are antique guns the problem? No? Then it's not a solution to stop gun violence.

We do have solutions to stopping juvenile crime and violence, it's called enforcing the laws that are already on the books. Think of the lives you would save if you allowed our system to actually keep people who would commit murder in jail.

I adamantly request that you reject the vast majority of SB 16. It appears that Governor Lamont is using the uptick in crime, especially juvenile, as cover for a bill that, in its name and minimal content, seeks to provide safety to the public. Yet, the number of utterly useless and offensive measures against the folks who are not committing these crimes, the legal gun owners, is evidence of his hatred toward gun owners. Do not punish those who have done nothing wrong!!

SB 16 wants to address juvenile crime. That is laudable, and needed, but why ALL of the other parts of this bill that would not apply to juveniles who are already prohibited from purchasing and/or carrying firearms? Predictably, this bill seeks to make more things illegal for the people who aren't committing crimes. I am willing to bet that the vast majority of "ghost guns" and "assault weapons" are NOT used in crimes. 70% of firearms crimes are nulled. However, instead of trying to reduce crime through enforcement of existing laws, SB 16 seeks to create more laws which law-abiding gun will follow and criminals will ignore because they know the risk of prosecution is so low.

This bill is filled with anti-gun provisions that will have zero effect on crime in Connecticut and will only affect the law-abiding gun owners in our state. It is merely a "feel good" bill that will have no impact on criminals who don't obey our laws anyway. The so-called "assault weapons" are in very common use in Connecticut and are never used by law abiding gun owners to commit crimes. I OPPOSE SB 16. Not just because its contrary to my Rights as a gun owner, but because most of those measures would prove futile to reducing crime.

Please do not let this stand. Please oppose Senate Bill 16.

In addition, please OPPOSE H.B. No. 5416 – AN ACT CONCERNING BULK PURCHASES OF PISTOLS AND REVOLVERS. This affects businesses in our state that sell firearms such as Cabelas and Bass Pro shops, the

smaller independent firearms dealers, and individuals who purchase, sell, and trade firearms. Again, this bill will have zero effect on crime in Connecticut and will only affect the law-abiding gun owners in our state. It is merely a “feel good” bill that will have no impact on criminals who don’t obey our laws anyway. Connecticut has among the most stringent and onerous firearms laws in our nation. Every single transaction has a background check and is reported to the state police and the local police, regardless of if from a dealer or from a private sale. Citizens have to get permission from the state to buy or sell a firearm, I don’t think we should need government permission to exercise our constitutional rights.

I also ask that you SUPPORT Raised S.B. No. 388 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFENSE OF A PERSON OR A PERSON’S DWELLING, PLACE OF WORK OR MOTOR VEHICLE.

SUPPORT Raised H.B. No. 5415 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSFER OF ASSAULT WEAPONS AND LARGE CAPACITY MAGAZINES.

SUPPORT Raised H.B. No. 5412 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE DUTY TO RETREAT IN A RELIGIOUS HOUSE OF WORSHIP.

Sincerely,

John Harmon

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